



FACE Program Fact Sheet

Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation

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LOGGER DIES AFTER LOG SKIDDER ROLLS DOWNHILL AND STRIKES HIM WHILE FELLING A TREE

BACKGROUND

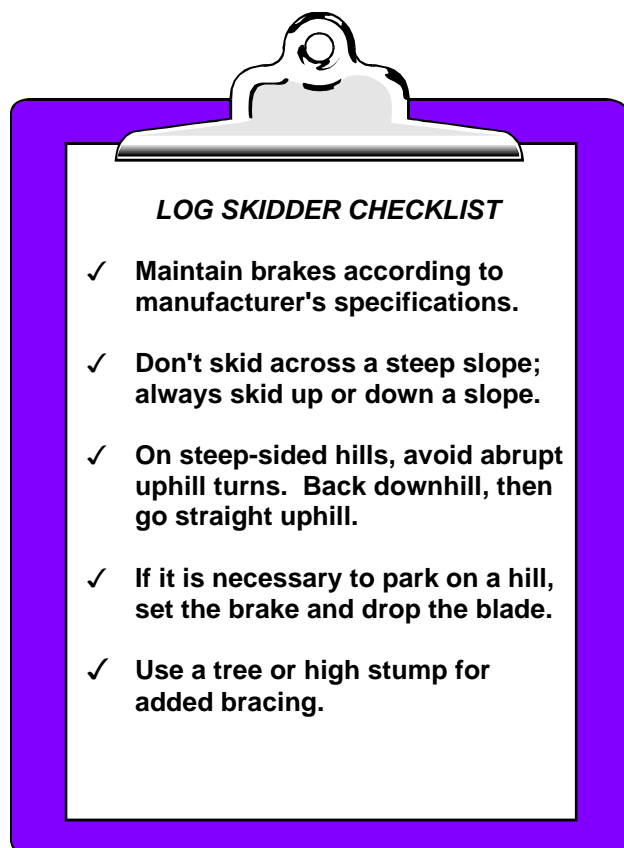
The Wisconsin Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program received reports of 115 fatal occupational injuries during 1997. One of those incidents occurred when a logger was struck by a log skidder that rolled downhill.

This fact sheet describes the incident and requests that occupational safety professionals and employers who use log skidders bring the following recommendations to the attention of log skidder operators and others who work in the logging industry.

THE INCIDENT

A 37-year-old male logger died after being struck by a log skidder. The skidder was over 20 years old and had originally been equipped with a mechanical brake system. The mechanical brake was replaced by a micro lock brake system. The victim was felling trees on a slope with a 20% grade. He parked the skidder about 20 feet uphill in line with the tree he was felling. He engaged the micro lock system, kept the motor running, and positioned the blade near the ground. Apparently, the brakes failed and the skidder rolled downhill, striking the victim with the rear wheel and crushing him against the tree.

The co-worker heard the victim's cries for help and ran to the scene. He tried to use his CB radio to call for help, but it didn't work. The co-worker drove his own skidder to the victim, placed him in the skidder, then drove the skidder to his truck. He carried the victim to the truck's passenger seat, then drove almost 15 miles to the hospital. The victim died at the hospital.



LOG SKIDDER CHECKLIST

- ✓ Maintain brakes according to manufacturer's specifications.
- ✓ Don't skid across a steep slope; always skid up or down a slope.
- ✓ On steep-sided hills, avoid abrupt uphill turns. Back downhill, then go straight uphill.
- ✓ If it is necessary to park on a hill, set the brake and drop the blade.
- ✓ Use a tree or high stump for added bracing.

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, in agreement with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) conducts research on occupational fatalities. The Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program focuses on identifying factors that increase the risk of work-related fatal injuries. The Wisconsin FACE Program helps in the development and use of improved safety measures for preventing fatal work injuries.

PLEASE POST

FACE information is produced and distributed to provide current, relevant education on methods to prevent severe work-related injuries.

If you have comments or questions, please call the FACE Project at 608/266-7298, or write:

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